

MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, March 16, 2005, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Lane called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2004 AND FEBRUARY 16, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Neal and unanimously carried, the Minutes for the meeting of December 15, 2004 were approved with the following correction:

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Neal requested that the Commission adjourn in ~~memory~~ **honor** of Louis Cummings Jr.

On motion of Commissioner Rubenstein, seconded by Commissioner Jensen and unanimously carried, the Minutes for the meeting of February 16, 2005 were approved with the following corrections:

Fumilia Unida should be spelled **FAMILIA UNIDA**

Teddy should be spelled **TEDDIE**

The members of the Ad Hoc Transportation Committee should be: Commissioner Neal as the Chair,
Commissioners Wright and Siegel **Rubenstein** and Ms. Remhild

Commissioner Resendez should be noted as **ABSENT** on the Attendance Sheet.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cyndi Soto and Jamie Watson from the organization CALIF (Communities Actively Living Independent and Free) requested that they be placed on the April agenda to give a presentation on the pending “visit ability” ordinance for the City of Los Angeles. The ordinance is currently being reviewed by various City Officials.

Commissioner Rubenstein offered comments on the City of Long Beach’s “visit ability” ordinance which was instituted a few years ago and advised the CALIF representatives to ensure that the guidelines relating to restrooms, hallways and ramps are upheld.

CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT

Chairperson Lane introduced and welcomed the new Fundraiser for the 2005 Access Awards Luncheon, Ralph Gottlieb.

Chairperson Lane commented that the Commission is very fortunate to be working with Mr. Gottlieb who has previously worked with some very prestigious organizations. Mr. Gottlieb has a wealth of fundraising expertise, is very familiar with the Access Awards Luncheon, and in line with the structure, goals and purpose of the luncheon event.

STAFF REPORT

Jim Corbett reported on the following items:

Sunset Review Procedures

Mr. Corbett gave an overview on the Sunset Review procedures stating that the process occurs for each Commission every four or five years. The report is devised to determine the relevancy and track the effectiveness of the Commissions and Committees operating in the County of Los Angeles.

Each Commission does a “self-evaluation” that is prepared and sent to the Auditor Controller. The Commission is requested to address a number of issues which includes its accomplishments, meetings held, Commissioner attendance and the Commission’s goals and objectives. The Sunset Review document and recommendation are then reviewed by the Audit Committee, which is comprised of five Deputies, one from each supervisorial district, who make a final recommendation to the Board of

Supervisors as to whether the Commission should continue to exist or sunset. When a Commission is approved for continuation, it receives a new Sunset Review date which is usually five years in the future.

A draft of the Sunset Review will be submitted to the Commission for review, input, and approval, before it is finalized for submission to the Auditor Controller.

Mr. Corbett stated that he is confident there will be no problem in getting the Commission's sunset review date extended. Issues such as reasonable accommodation, equal access, and barrier removal, will need to be addressed until there is equal access to all areas of life for people with disabilities living in Los Angeles County. The last Sunset Review for the Commission was April 2000.

Commissioner Attendance

Commissioner attendance is reported to the Board of Supervisors on a quarterly basis, and reviewed by the Board offices. The document requests a reporting on how many meetings were held in a particular quarter, and how many meetings each Commissioner attended or missed during the quarter. Mr. Corbett noted that each Commissioner serves at the pleasure of his/her appointing Supervisor.

Following discussion, Mr. Corbett advised that if a Commission experiences a problem getting a quorum and conducting its business due to chronic absenteeism by one or more Commissioners or because of unfilled vacancies, the Commission can express its concerns to the appointing Supervisor(s) of those Commissioners. However, Mr. Corbett advised that the decision to fill a vacancy or replace a commissioner is at the discretion of the appointing Supervisor.

Commissioner Neal brought up the subject of stipend pay and the procedure of Commissioners only being reimbursed for meetings where there is a quorum. Staff was asked to review the ADA and evaluate if some type of modification could be made to the Commission's Ordinance that would address the possibility of increasing stipend pay as a reasonable accommodation.

Approval of expenses for Commissioner Hamilton to attend the “Building Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities” Conference on March 29-31, 2005

In the absence of Commissioner Hamilton, Commissioner Neal reported that due to health reasons, Commissioner Hamilton will not be able to attend the conference as previously planned.

Chairperson Lane stated that the Commission will be sending its wishes for a speedy recovery to Commissioner Hamilton.

PRESENTATION ON FAMILIA-UNIDA LIVING WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Commissioner Resendez gave an overview on the services provided by Familia Unida Living with Multiple Sclerosis. Commissioner Resendez is the founder of the organization which was established in 1998 after she endured her own personal experience with MS. At that time, Commissioner Resendez discovered that culturally appropriate and expert information, as well as services and resources, were not available from local or national MS organizations in the Spanish Language. Familia Unida Living with MS is the first bilingual English and Spanish MS nonprofit organization in the United States.

Commissioner Resendez showed a video highlighting community members involved with the organization and the activities and accomplishments of Familia Unida which provides counseling, support group services, and information regarding available services for individuals and families affected by MS and other debilitating disabilities.

Following a question and answer period, Chairperson Lane thanked Commissioner Resendez for her informative presentation.

ADA COMPLIANCE OFFICE REPORT

Gordon Anthony, ADA Compliance Officer reported that he and Chairperson Lane were in attendance at an award ceremony in which the City of Pasadena was honored as being “the most accessible city for 2004” by the National Organization on

Disabilities. Pasadena received recognition for its commitment to overall access and was presented with \$25,000 which officials stated would be used to further their accessibility efforts in that city.

Mr. Anthony gave an update on the most recent meeting between County representatives and filming companies to continue discussions on the use of ADA compliant cable protectors. Mr. Anthony reported that the filming companies and major studios involved are very willing to alleviate this problem and are working well together to resolve the issue.

Major studios are also sending out advisories to all studios alerting them of the need to use ADA compliant cable protectors or ramps while filming, and the Safety Commission is assisting the studios with getting the word out.

Mr. Anthony stated he is currently working to develop a set of building and safety specific guidelines that would be required for the use of these temporary cable ramps, and the Department of Public Works will be adding language to all of its contracts regarding requirements for accessible cable protectors.

Mr. Anthony continued his report stating that the ADA Compliance Office:

- Is continuing its efforts to perform random evaluations on County Departments for Transition Plan progression and ADA Compliance. Compliance reviews have been performed on six County departments; 36 audits have been conducted to determine a Department's level of accessibility; and 32 interviews with personnel have been conducted. Six additional departments are scheduled for compliance reviews next year.
- Is currently exploring the feasibility of developing code requirements for visual alarms beyond common areas for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Has received funding to make accessibility renovations at several County departments which include Beaches and Harbors, County Libraries, and parking projects.

- Has been notified that an additional \$1 million has been allocated to fund accessibility renovations in County departments for next year.
- Working with County departments on funding acquisitions for barrier removal.

Following Mr. Anthony's report Chairperson Lane thanked him for bringing the important issue of ADA compliant cable ramps to the Commission for its participation and input and expressed gratitude to Mr. Anthony for the superb work he has been doing.

Chairperson Lane also announced that this year will be the 15th anniversary of the ADA and that the Commission should come up with something special to celebrate the fact and tie the event into the Access Awards Luncheon in October. Following discussion, it was suggested that this issue be addressed at the April meeting.

The Commission was also informed by staff that this year is the 30th anniversary of the Commission.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Access Awards Committee

Commissioner Jensen reported that the new fundraiser was formally introduced at today's meeting. The Committee is currently working on plans for the upcoming luncheon which include accepting suggestions for a luncheon theme and awardees. In addition, the Committee is recommending that the Jane Small Award, Billy Barty Award, and Robert Abell Philanthropic Award be reinstated for this year.

Commissioner Jensen also reported that the Committee is hopeful this year's fundraising efforts will allow the Commission to increase the number of scholarship recipients from five to ten.

Public Relations Committee

Commissioner Krzyzanowski reported that he met with staff before the Committee meeting to receive clarification and discuss the Sunset review for the Commission, the commission brochure and other issues.

Commissioner Krzyzanowski reported that the Committee will be developing a mock-up for the new Commission brochure modeled after

the Commission for Women's brochure. Commission staff would assist with formatting the brochure which would be sent to a professional printer following approval by the Commission. The Committee anticipates the brochure will be complete in time to be distributed at the upcoming Abilities Expo in June.

Chairperson Lane advised that the Committee should also submit estimates for the development and printing costs of the brochure, determine how many will be produced, staff involvement, the target audience, and distribution locations.

The Public Relations Committee also addressed the development of the Commission's website which must be created in accordance with County regulations; exploring alternative methods to increase awareness of the Commission and its activities such as the use of the County Digest, and a Commission banner; and changing the time of the Committee meeting so that it doesn't conflict with the Commission's radio program.

Commissioner Neal announced that she would be willing to man a Commission booth at the upcoming Renaissance Faire; mentioned that the Commission on Disabilities is not listed in the County's Telephone Directory; and would like to do something to celebrate Disability Awareness month.

Chairperson Lane advised that at the Commissioner Retreat last year one of the Commission's goals was to develop a quarterly report on the accomplishments of the Commission for submission to the Board of Supervisors and that the report was to be done by the Public Relations Committee. Following discussion, Commissioner Krzyzanowski stated that the Committee would address the issue and report back to the Commission.

Community Forum

Commissioner Neal reported that today's segment of the Community Forum was on transportation issues. Jess Segovia from ASI, Alan Cantrell from the MTA, and officers from the Department of Transportation Parking Enforcement for the City of Los Angeles were in attendance to answer caller questions and provide information.

Several officers addressed parking issues such as abuse and the proper use of handicap placards, and members of the public were given information on where to turn in placards that were no longer being used by disabled individuals or had been found. Information and referral numbers were also offered to the public on the application process and complaint process.

Commissioner Neal added that tapes of the program are on file in the Commission office and provided the program schedule for upcoming segments. Commissioner Krzyzanowski requested that he be scheduled for the May 18th program.

ITEMS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA

- Discussion on ideas for celebrating the 15th Anniversary of the passage of the ADA and the 30th Anniversary for the Commission on Disabilities
- The Commission's participation as Exhibitors at the upcoming Abilities Expo
- Invitation to Alan Cantrell of MTA to address the Commission on transportation issues

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Griffith a member of the public, expressed her concerns regarding her treatment while visiting MTA headquarters and asked for advice on how to file a complaint against the MTA. Chair Lane advised that she would assist Ms. Griffith following the meeting and Gordon Anthony added that he could provide her with information for filing a complaint with the U. S. Department of Transportation.

Gordon Anthony announced that Goodwill Industries would be having an ADA hearing on March 29th.

Donna Dougherty, another member of the public, commented that she is gathering support to have electronic doors installed at the front entrance to the Griffith Park Observatory. The facility has undergone extensive accessibility renovations over the last few years, but does not have an accessible front entrance to the building.

Ms. Dougherty is advocating for the installation of the electronic doors in the front of the building and stated that Councilmember LaBonge is also in support of the doors.

Chair Lane advised Ms. Dougherty to come to the next Commission meeting because "visit –ability" in the City of Los Angeles will be addressed then.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Krzyzanowski announced that the February 12th Mental Health workshop on Proposition 63 was well attended and very successful and thanked the Commission for their support and endorsement of the event.

Chairperson Lane announced that Commissioner Resendez has been chosen as Woman of the Year by Assemblywoman Judy Chu and will be honored at a reception on March 21st.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present

Carol Lane, Chair
Janet Neal, Vice Chair
Steve Jensen
Richard Krzyzanowski
Irma Resendez
Harley Rubenstein
Carlton Russell
Bernard Siegel
John B. Troost
Sheila D. Wright

Board of Supervisors

Jim Corbett
Dedie Ward
Gabriel Alexander

Absent

Kecia Weller, Treasurer
Ruth Ann Acosta
Viola Vivian Corbett
Ernest Hamilton
Michael Gureckas
Wendy Welt

Department Liaisons

Gordon Anthony, ADA Compliance Officer

Juan Benitez, Dept. of Parks and Recreation

Carlton Lindo, Consumer Affairs

Guests

Cyndi Soto

Janice Watson

Stella Juedson

Karam Iskander

Chunta Jennison

Maria Tan

Albert Marques

John Whitbread

Ralph Gottlieb

Dane Davis

Eleanor Wright

Royce Crowder

Mary Griffieth

Donna Dougherty